



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

Rachel K. Paulose, United States Attorney

David Anderson, Public Affairs Specialist
(612) 664-5684; cell: (612) 730-2251

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, Oct. 31, 2007

Grand jury indicts 2 for operating marriage fraud ring

A federal grand jury indicted two people on Oct. 29 in connection with operating a marriage fraud ring centered in the Twin Cities. The ring recruited United States citizens to enter into fraudulent marriages with Chinese nationals in order for the Chinese nationals to obtain visas and other immigration benefits.

Le Guo Wu, 30, Philadelphia, Penn., and Houa Vang, 23, St. Paul, were each charged with one count of conspiracy to profit financially from arranging, facilitating and participating in fraudulent marriages, and each were charged with one count of alien smuggling.

According to the indictment, the two conspired to operate the ring for the purpose of evading any U.S. immigration laws, and obtaining immigrant visas for the foreign nationals. The ring operated in Minnesota and in Philadelphia beginning on an unknown date no later than January 2006.

The indictment also stated that the U.S. citizens were paid thousands of dollars to enter into the marriages, and both the U.S. citizens and Chinese nationals were assisted with completing the necessary documentation in connection with the fraudulent marriages. The U.S. citizens would travel to China for the purpose of documenting the alleged relationships between the citizens and the nationals. Chinese nationals would pay to be beneficiaries of the fraudulent marriages.

The two defendants, according to the indictment, also brought in and attempted to bring a Chinese national into the U.S. without prior authorization between January 2006 and April 2007.

If convicted, the two each face a potential maximum penalty of five years in federal prison for the conspiracy count, and face a potential 10-year maximum penalty for the smuggling count. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge.

This case was the result of an investigation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David M. Genrich.

An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.